

In improvisation, we strive to:

Accept

Build

These rules apply in life as well. We cannot build upon another's energy until we acknowledge that they have a right to the authority of their ideas. When we give over control, we open ourselves to possibility. We take people where they are, not where we expect they should be.

Information is a gift.

Anytime I offer to build--to provide new information-I am offering you the gift of energy. To deny the build in any way is to steal. I can deny or **block** by "wimping" out, asking questions or in any way making you work harder to stay with me in the moment.

Improvisation is about associations

The mind is rich, vast and dense with information. By "getting out of my own way," I free myself from editing, thinking or controlling that information. I am freed to associate and these associations lead to ideas and direction.

Improvisation is about the story

Improvisers find the pattern and the pattern tells the story. The story is possessed by no one and everyone. When I freely allow my associative or "design" mind to move to "sign" or narrative mind, I can find the story. These stories will often resonate deeper than any might suspect and will reflect not only the intensely personal but also the deeply universal.

Improvisation is about the group

In improvisation, we seek what is known as the "**group mind**." This is not the formulaic rigidity of GroupThink but is rather a shared awareness of the subtle signals and direction of the whole. Groupmind is a fluid state that allows for freedom, open sharing and generative thinking.

Only the truth is funny

This quote from comic and Gang of Seven writer Rick Reynolds tells us something we already should know. Truth resonates. We recognize ourselves in the laughter for better or worse. Laughter is an accept, a yes to being human. When we laugh, we open to positive energy.

Improvisation is not a joke

Improv is often, but not always, funny. It is never about jokes-jokes are known as theft or grandstanding. When I grab a laugh or take attention away from what we are doing for who I am, I steal from the moment, block our group energy and slow things down. Our common goal is always to move forward, together. To build something that only could be built by the group. If I wanted to build alone, I would work alone.

Improv is about love

The whole will always be greater than the sum of the parts. **Trust** and the rest will evolve. Improvisation is about living here and now-it is about journeying into the mystery and trusting the Spirit to take care of you and all the rest. If we do so, wonderful things do happen.

To learn more about it, go to: yesand.com or check out:

Only the Truth is Funny Halpern, C, Close, D and Johnson, K (1994)

Impro. Johnstone, K. (1989);